

## Notices of Books.

THE HISTORY OF THE FOREST OF EXMOOR, by E. T. MacDermot, M.A., of the Middle Temple, Barrister-at-law. (Barnicott and Pearce, The Wessex Press, Taunton, 1911; royal 8vo., pp. ix, 480, maps and plans; price £1 1s. net).

So much has been written about Exmoor that a new book must produce good reasons for its appearance, or else come under Lord Rosebery's lash for adding to the already overwhelming mass of literature which threatens to choke our libraries, public and private. And when the new volume has 480 pages, as against Rawle's "Annals" with 163 pages, the responsibility is still more serious. In this case, however, the last comer has no difficulty in showing its right to exist. It is a valuable monograph compiled from original documents, and therefore avoiding the twin sins of padding and futile speculation. The author is well aware of the value of research in the Public Record Office to fill the yawning gaps in older histories, and has a proper sense of evidence. The bulk of the book is devoted to a careful study of the manner of life of the inhabitants, who must have spent much time in disputing with the officers of the Forest and of the Swainmote Court. The descent of the families who held the forestership under the Crown is fully traced down to the Commonwealth, when the fee simple was sold to Mr. James Boevey. Two chapters are given to the records of his unceasing litigation with the Crown and his tenants in the forest, but throughout these lawsuits there is not a single reference to the misdeeds of any person bearing the name of Doone. It may now be concluded that there is no historical basis for this legend. The value of the book is greatly increased by the series of maps showing the limits of the Forest at different periods.

E. H. BATES HARBIN.

THE GLASTONBURY LAKE VILLAGE: A FULL DESCRIPTION OF THE EXCAVATIONS AND THE RELICS DISCOVERED, 1892-1907, Vol. I, by Arthur Bulleid, F.S.A., and Harold St. George Gray. (Published by the Glastonbury Antiquarian Society, 1911; royal 4to., pp. xxviii, 352; 58 plates, 136 illustrations in the text).

The first of the two royal 4to. volumes in which will be recorded the results of the researches carried out at the Glastonbury Lake Village since 1892 is beyond what could have been expected by the

subscribers, and comes as an immediate surprise in its beautiful "format," and in the number and splendid execution of its illustrations, even before a glance into its pages reveals the extent of research which must have been undertaken to render the record what it is. In external form the volume will take its place naturally on library shelves with those of General Pitt-Rivers, with which it is practically uniform, and in method and thoroughness the contents will by no means suffer in comparison with his great works. It can only be classed with them as "monumental."

As is well known, the production of this volume was jointly undertaken by Dr. Arthur Bulleid, and Mr. H. St. George Gray, and it might be rather hard to discriminate between the results of their respective labours, so close has evidently been the collaboration. Dr. Bulleid, however, has been mainly responsible for the recording of structural details, and Mr. Gray for the classification and close description of the immense number of relics discovered,—the result of the joint work being most satisfactory in its harmony and equality of method.

The binding of the volume seems very strong, and the paper is of good quality, and heavy, both these points being important for a book which will be constantly referred to. The green canvas cover is decorated with borders and back bands adapted from actual Lake Village patterns, the centre of the front cover also bearing in gold a very good impression of the celebrated bronze bowl. The full page plates number 58, and the illustrations in the text 136, ranging from detailed plans and diagrams by Dr. Bulleid, and drawings by Mr. E. Sprankling, to the beautiful photographs of the actual excavations taken during the progress of the work by Mr. Gray and Mr. W. Tully of Glastonbury. The very careful choice of point of view and of lighting evident in these photographs will be appreciated by everyone with a knowledge of photography, and is in itself an evidence of the care and time expended in each detail of the explorations.

The authors have been fortunate in securing an opening chapter by Dr. Robert Munro, the well-known authority on lake dwellings, who has been closely connected with the work from its beginning. He has given an account of the discovery of the village in 1892 by Dr. Bulleid, the formation of the Committee for the prosecution of the work, and the generous gift of the site to the Glastonbury Antiquarian Society by the late Mr. Bath, which has enabled the work to be carried on without intrusion or disturbance from the first. The value of this gift to archæology is incalculable.

After the formation of the Committee, the work proceeded under the personal superintendence of Dr. Bulleid until 1898, after which season it was discontinued for the next five years, with the exception of the excavation of parts of two mounds, for the visit of our Society to the site, by Mr. Gray in 1902; these excavations were reported in full in our volume for that year, and from that time Mr. Gray has been associated with the work.

In 1904 the excavations were resumed under the joint direction of Dr. Bulleid and Mr. Gray, and the work then progressed without interruption until its completion in 1907. The funds needed, £700 in all, have been drawn in about equal parts from grants made by the British Association and subscriptions, these last including the generous gift of £50 made by Mr. Heward Bell. These expenses do not include the production of the present monograph, which is defrayed by subscription; and there is every reason to hope that now the first volume has appeared, no difficulty will be found in obtaining the required number of subscribers to cover the cost of what is evidently an expensive publication.

Most of the editorial work, and the arrangement of the many details connected with the reproduction of the illustrations and the printing of the volume have been in the hands of Mr. Gray, whose early experience with General Pitt-Rivers has specially fitted him for this department of the undertaking.

Dr. Munro gives in his chapter a lucid description of the site and of the general structural remains of the village, which is in some respects unusual in its characteristics, standing in a sort of midway position as regards structure between the Continental type of lake dwellings and the known British crannogs. He describes the physical features of the land, or rather, fen surface on which the village was built, and summarises the methods of construction, in a way which serves as a key to the detailed descriptions of timbering and floor levels given in Chapter III. He has gone fully into the question of the comparative civilization of the inhabitants, and refers categorically to the localities in the British Islands from which Late-Celtic relics have been recovered, comparing them with objects of the same period found elsewhere in Europe.

With regard to the inhabitants themselves, Dr. Munro has much to say, the question of the Celtic migrations into Britain being well summarised. We have yet to wait for the report by Prof. Boyd Dawkins on the measurements, etc., of the crania found, before the questions opened in this section can be conclusively answered. Still, as Dr. Munro points out, it is not difficult to determine the approximate date of the end of the occupation of the village, which would be about the middle of the first century A.D., though when it came into existence is a more difficult question. Another open question connected with the period of occupation is the evidence, commented on elsewhere in the detailed reports, that there have been two occupations of the place; firstly by folk dwelling in square huts, and then by dwellers in the round huts whose foundations have been here and there strengthened by the timbering of the older dwellings. There seems to be no sign of progressive civilization however throughout the period during which the place was inhabited. What is most certain is that the influence of Roman culture had not reached the village when it was abandoned, and this entire exclusion of all but actually native art renders the Glastonbury "finds" the more important. The record is one of purely

British culture in the Early Iron Age, which cannot be too closely studied, and it is not too much to say that these two volumes will be for many years the standard text book on their subject.

Dr. Bulleid commences his special portion of the record work with a full and careful description of the country surrounding Glastonbury, giving maps and sections, and two very interesting photographs of the levels during a flood, when the water has found its ancient hollows and reproduced the meres of pre-drainage days.

The village itself seems to have been deliberately placed on a fairly solid spot in the fen, chosen for its proximity to navigable water. Why, with upland sites available in every direction, a crannog should have been built at all remains an unsolved question. It may never be proved whether the builders were displaced from elsewhere by an invading wave of migration, or were themselves migrants who either preferred the semi-aquatic life of the meres to upland conditions, or were driven for safety into this position. It is possible that cranial measurements may throw some light on this problem.

The conditions in the crannog would seem at first sight to us to be of hopeless discomfort, but the evidences are much to the contrary. The relics are those of a well-to-do and industrious race, and that the folk had at least some possessions on shore is evidenced by the occurrence of horse-trappings and wheels, which could have been of no use in the Venetian conditions of the village itself. The cemetery of the village is not known. Presumably it lies among the uplands somewhere, but we have no help toward identification of the tribe to which the villagers belonged from their burial customs.

The section on the actual structure of the huts and of the substructure on which they were built is perfect. Nothing of value seems to have escaped notice, and it would be possible to reconstruct one of the dwellings with a close approach to accuracy from Dr. Bulleid's drawings. What strikes one at once is the amount of labour which was necessitated in the raising of the floors from time to time as the peaty substructure consolidated and sank. The conveyance of tons of clay from some as yet unidentified spot on shore must have been a matter of communal work, rather than of individual labour. It is moreover a proof that the position of the village was for some reason too advantageous to be abandoned for the sake of heavy labour incurred in retaining it.

The detailed descriptions of the individual huts from foundation to the relics within their walls may be "dry" reading to any but a student, but to him they will be of absorbing interest. We know of nothing to equal them elsewhere, and they have set a standard of thoroughness which in itself is invaluable.

It is worth noting that there has been no destruction of any portion of the village by the excavations. It will be possible from these plans to open out the same section and the same timbering, which has been once exposed and planned. Even the surface of the field itself still preserves the same appearance as it had when Dr. Bulleid first had his

attention drawn to it. The point is one which the modern archæologist will appreciate.

Some of the hut-walls have been preserved in the peat where they fell, and the photographs facing pp. 95 and 136 show one of these wattled walls in the position found, and the clay with which the wattling was rendered weatherproof lies everywhere. Now and again it is evident that a hut was burnt, as might be expected, but no theory as to why the village was abandoned can be drawn from this. The implements of the thatcher, strangely like those of to-day, have been found, and a thatched village is always in peril from fire. One might almost safely deduce from the absence of articles of much intrinsic value that the village was abandoned rather on account of some inundation, which in its gradual rise gave the inhabitants time for escape, than owing to hostile inroads, or a general conflagration, of any sort.

The latter half of the volume is concerned with the detailed description of the relics found in the village, and this has been the special department of Mr. St. George Gray, the only exception being the chapter on wooden articles, which Dr. Bulleid has written and illustrated. Every object found has been described and classified under a separate heading for the material, bronze, lead and tin, shale and wood, the weaving-combs which are such a special feature of the village belongings, and the crucibles, each having their separate section. Every article has been described in full detail, and a drawing or photograph either in the text or in the plates has been given, the drawings being largely the work of Mr. Sprankling. It would not be fair to pass by the drawings in the volume without a word of special praise. The difficulty of rendering the texture of the materials is extreme, but a glance at the plates will shew that this has been overcome. It is almost a specialised form of drawing, and the results are, in some ways, superior to anything which could be obtained by photography.

As we have said, there is no reason to suppose that any article found in the village has been of other than home manufacture, but the importance of comparison with similar relics from abroad has been fully recognised. The Glastonbury civilization is the most valuable link with the Continent in its new light on the great Celtic migrations which has yet been made. To take the section on fibulæ alone, these being a special feature of the "finds," and serving to connect the culture of the village with what is known as the La Tène type on the Continent, we are given a full list of those of the type found in England up to date, with full references to the publications in which the "finds" have been recorded.

The almost purely British penannular brooch, of which type the village had its own variety not found elsewhere, is equally fully illustrated, and there is a list again of the "finds" in Britain of the somewhat rare bronze mirror.

Section after section is marked by the same care and labour, and the result is that this volume is invaluable as a reference book on the industrial arts of the Early Iron Age in general.

Mention of the weaving-combs and the almost complete woodwork of looms cannot be omitted. The bronze objects and the crucibles for their production, found and so fully described, proves the skill of the men in metal working, and the work of the women is in evidence in the wonderful series of combs which the peat has preserved. They were used for beating down and consolidating the material as it grew on the loom, and would be as useful to-day on the "peasant looms" of the north as they were at Glastonbury, and similar implements are in use in the carpet-weaving works of England even now. The use of the comb is in itself an advance in the art of weaving from that of the single edge of the "spatha," which survived here and there almost until to-day. It is a labour-saving contrivance, as it substitutes many edges for the one.

The section on the ironwork of the village is yet to come. That on wood is most suggestive, as the marks of iron tools still remain on many of the articles. The lathe, in some form which may be still in use in the East, was known, and used in an unexpectedly skilful manner which cannot be excelled to-day. The carpentry was good, and the cooper had mastered what is by no means a simple problem. One is apt to think of the early Briton as an amateur in the process of learning, but his woodwork proves that he was, at Glastonbury at least, a skilled craftsman. We have to thank the peat for the preservation of his work in such a wonderful way, but in addition, we are indebted to Dr. Bulleid and Mr. Gray and their men for recovering what was found. The ancient timber was of little different consistency from that of the surrounding peat, yet with a sort of instinct, the unerring certainty with which the almost imperceptible difference was recognized was acquired, and has not been the least remarkable part of the investigations. The section on woodwork concludes this volume, and leaves us only longing for the next. We would not hurry that, if it is to be as full as the present, for in all honesty we believe that we have a work here which can hardly be matched in thoroughness and utility. It is a gain to archæology, and the Glastonbury Anti-quarian Society may be proud to stand as its sponsor in publication.

All business communications with regard to the work should be made to Mr. Gray, at Taunton Castle.

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